



GCSE Subject Criteria for Humanities



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The criteria

Introduction

GCSE subject criteria set out the knowledge, understanding, skills and assessment objectives common to all GCSE specifications in a given subject.

They provide the framework within which the awarding organisation creates the detail of the specification.

Aims and learning outcomes

1. GCSE specifications in Humanities should encourage learners to be inspired, moved and changed by following a broad, coherent, satisfying and worthwhile course of study and gain an insight into related sectors. They should prepare learners to make informed decisions about further learning opportunities and career choices.
2. GCSE specifications in Humanities must enable learners to:
 - actively engage in the process of humanities to develop as effective and independent learners, and as critical and reflective thinkers with enquiring minds;
 - develop an understanding that is coherent, holistic and extends beyond the remit of the subject discipline;
 - develop an awareness of how people of different cultures and societies relate to each other and the world in which we live, now and in the past;
 - explore ways in which cultural, economic, environmental, historical, moral, political, religious, social, spatial, and spiritual factors interact to shape the world in which we live today;
 - consider the opportunities and constraints that influence human societies at a range of different levels;
 - examine issues that affect the nature and quality of human life, including an appreciation of diversity and similarities and differences of attitudes, values and beliefs in society;
 - develop enquiry, critical thinking and decision-making skills through personal and collaborative investigation of issues that are important, real and relevant to young people and to the world in which they live;

- consider the rights and responsibilities they have as individuals and their own contribution to humanity.

Subject content

3. The content of GCSE specifications in Humanities must reflect the learning outcomes.
4. GCSE specifications in Humanities must allow learners to develop the knowledge, skills and understanding specified below.
5. GCSE specifications in Humanities must require learners to:
 - study the key features and characteristics of issues and themes of the societies studied, and the past and current experience of people in these societies;
 - investigate the social, cultural, religious and ethnic diversities of the societies studied;
 - explore and examine issues important to humanity from individual, family, local, national and global perspectives;
 - study the attitudes and values that inform human behaviour, influence human processes and shape a sustainable future;
 - study cultural, economic, environmental, historical, moral, political, religious, social, spatial and spiritual factors that have an impact on issues important to people and the world in which we live.

Assessment objectives

6. All specifications in Humanities must require learners to demonstrate their ability to:

Assessment objectives		Weighting
AO1	Recall, select and communicate their knowledge and understanding of concepts, issues and terminology.	40–50%
AO2	Apply their knowledge and understanding in familiar and unfamiliar contexts.	30–40%
AO3	Analyse and evaluate information, sources, arguments and interpretations.	15–25%

Scheme of assessment

7. GCSE specifications in Humanities must allocate a weighting of 75 per cent to external assessment and a weighting of 25 per cent to controlled assessment in the overall scheme of assessment.
8. Question papers must be targeted at the full range of GCSE grades.

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